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SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
IN MICHAELMAS TERM, 1872.

BY

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I.—DEFINITION OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING.
II.—THE RELATION OF ENGRAVING TO OTHER ARTS IN FLORENCE.
III.—THE TECHNICS OF WOOD ENGRAVING.

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SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

LECTURE I.

DEFINITION OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING.

1. THE entrance on my duty for to-day begins the fourth year of my official work in Oxford; and I doubt not that some of my audience are asking themselves, very doubtfully—at all events, I ask myself, very anxiously—what has been done.

For practical result, I have not much to show. I announced, a fortnight since, that I would meet, the day before yesterday, any gentleman who wished to attend this course for purposes of study. My class, so minded, numbers four, of whom three wish to be artists, and ought not therefore, by rights, to be at Oxford at all; and the fourth is the last remaining unit of the class I had last year.

2. Yet I neither in this reproach myself, nor, if I could,

would I reproach the students who are not here. I do not reproach myself; for it was impossible for me to attend properly to the schools and to write the grammar for them at the same time; and I do not blame the absent students for not attending a school from which I have generally been absent myself. In all this, there is much to be mended, but, in true light, nothing to be regretted.

I say, I had to write my school grammar. These three volumes of lectures under my hand,* contain, carefully set down, the things I want you first to know. None of my writings are done fluently; the second volume of Modern Painters was all of it written twice—most of it, four times, —over; and these lectures have been written, I don't know how many times. You may think that this was done merely in an author's vanity, not in a tutor's care. To the vanity I plead guilty,—no man is more intensely vain than I am; but my vanity is set on having it *known* of me that I am a good master, not in having it *said* of me that I am a smooth author. My vanity is never more wounded than in being called a fine writer, meaning—that nobody need mind what I say.

3. Well, then, besides this vanity, I have some solicitude for your progress. You may give me credit for it or not, as you choose, but it is sincere. And that your advance may be safe, I have taken the best pains I could in laying down laws for it. In these three years I have got my gram-

* Inaugural series, Aratra Pentelici, and Eagle's Nest.

mar written, and, with the help of many friends, all working instruments in good order; and now we will try what we can do. Not that, even now, you are to depend on my presence with you in personal teaching. I shall henceforward think of the lectures less, of the schools more; but my best work for the schools will often be by drawing in Florence or in Lancashire—not here.

4. I have already told you several times that the course through which I mean every student in these schools should pass, is one which shall enable them to understand the elementary principles of the finest art. It will necessarily be severe, and seem to lead to no immediate result. Some of you will, on the contrary, wish to be taught what is immediately easy, and gives prospect of a manifest success.

But suppose they should come to the Professor of Logic and Rhetoric, and tell him they wanted to be taught to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of ——.

He would say to them,—I cannot, and if I could I would not, tell you how to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of ——. Your own character will form your style; your own zeal will direct it; your own obstinacy or ignorance may limit or exaggerate it; but my business is to prevent, as far as I can, your having *any* particular style; and to teach you the laws of all language, and the essential power of your own.

In like manner, this course, which I propose to you in art, will be calculated only to give you judgment and method in future study, to establish to your conviction the

laws of general art, and to enable you to draw, if not with genius, at least with sense and propriety.

The course, so far as it consists in practice, will be defined in my Instructions for the schools. And the theory connected with that practice is set down in the three lectures at the end of the first course I delivered—those on Line, Light, and Colour.

You will have, therefore, to get this book,* and it is the only one which you will need to have of your own,—the others are placed, for reference, where they will be accessible to you.

5. In the 139th paragraph, p. 132, it states the order of your practical study in these terms:

"I wish you to begin by getting command of line;—that is to say, by learning to draw a steady line, limiting with absolute correctness the form or space you intend it to limit; to proceed by getting command over flat tints, so that you may be able to fill the spaces you have enclosed evenly, either with shade or colour, according to the school you adopt; and, finally, to obtain the power of adding such fineness of drawing, within the masses, as shall express their undulation, and their characters of form and texture."

And now, since in your course of practice you are first required to attain the power of drawing lines accurately and delicately, so in the course of theory, or grammar, I

* My inaugural series of seven lectures, published at the Clarendon Press.

wish you first to learn the principles of linear design, exemplified by the schools which at the top of page 130 you will find characterized as the Schools of Line.

6. If I had command of as much time as I should like to spend with you on this subject, I would begin with the early forms of art which used the simplest linear elements of design. But, for general service and interest, it will be better that I should sketch what has been accomplished by the greatest masters in that manner; the rather that their work is more or less accessible to all, and has developed into the vast industries of modern engraving, one of the most powerful existing influences of education and sources of pleasure among civilized people.

And this investigation, so far from interrupting, will facilitate our examination of the history of the nobler arts. You will see in the preface to my lectures on Greek sculpture that I intend them to be followed by a course on architecture, and that by one on Florentine sculpture. But the art of engraving is so manifestly, at Florence, though not less essentially elsewhere, a basis of style both in architecture and sculpture, that it is absolutely necessary I should explain to you in what the skill of the engraver consists, before I can define with accuracy that of more admired artists. For engraving, though not altogether in the method of which you see examples in the print-shops of the High Street, is, indeed, a prior art to that either of building or sculpture, and is an inseparable part of both, when they are rightly practised.

7. And while we thus examine the scope of this first of the arts, it will be necessary that we learn also the scope of mind of the early practisers of it, and accordingly acquaint ourselves with the main events in the biography of the schools of Florence. To understand the temper and meaning of one great master is to lay the best, if not the only, foundation for the understanding of all; and I shall therefore make it the leading aim of this course of lectures to remind you of what is known, and direct you to what is knowable, of the life and character of the greatest Florentine master of engraving, Sandro Botticelli; and, incidentally, to give you some idea of the power of the greatest master of the German, or any northern, school, Hans Holbein.

8. You must feel, however, that I am using the word "engraving" in a somewhat different, and, you may imagine, a wider, sense, than that which you are accustomed to attach to it. So far from being a wider sense, it is in reality a more accurate and restricted one, while yet it embraces every conceivable right application of the art. And I wish, in this first lecture, to make entirely clear to you the proper meaning of the word, and proper range of the art of, engraving; in my next following lecture, to show you its place in Italian schools, and then, in due order, the place it ought to take in our own, and in all schools.

9. First then, to-day, of the Differentia, or essential quality of Engraving, as distinguished from other arts.

What answer would you make to me, if I asked casually what engraving was? Perhaps the readiest which would occur to you would be, "The translation of pictures into black and white by means admitting reduplication of impressions." But if that be done by lithography, we do not call it engraving,—whereas we speak contentedly and continually of seal engraving, in which there is no question of black and white. And, as scholars, you know that this customary mode of speaking is quite accurate; and that engraving means, primarily, making a permanent cut or furrow in something. The central syllable of the word has become a sorrowful one, meaning the most permanent of furrows.

10. But are you prepared absolutely to accept this limitation with respect to engraving as a pictorial art? Will you call nothing an engraving, except a group of furrows or cavities cut in a hard substance? What shall we say of mezzotint engraving, for instance, in which, though indeed furrows and cavities are produced mechanically as a ground, the artist's work is in effacing them? And when we consider the power of engraving in representing pictures and multiplying them, are we to recognize and admire no effects of light and shade except those which are visibly produced by dots or furrows? I mean, will the virtue of an engraving be in exhibiting these imperfect means of its effect, or in concealing them?

11. Here, for instance, is the head of a soldier by Durer,—a mere gridiron of black lines. Would this be

better or worse engraving if it were more like a photograph or lithograph, and no lines seen?—suppose, more like the head of Mr. Santley, now in all the music-shops, and really quite deceptive in light and shade, when seen from over the way? Do you think Durer's work would be better if it were more like that? And would you have me, therefore, leaving the question of technical method of production altogether to the craftsman, consider pictorial engraving simply as the production of a light-and-shade drawing, by some method permitting its multiplication for the public?

12. This, you observe, is a very practical question indeed. For instance, the illustrations of my own lectures on sculpture are equivalent to permanent photographs. There can be little doubt that means will be discovered of thus producing perfect facsimiles of artists' drawings; so that, if no more than facsimile be required, the old art of cutting furrows in metal may be considered as, at this day, virtually ended. And, indeed, it is said that line engravers cannot any more get apprentices, and that a pure steel or copper plate is not likely to be again produced, when once the old living masters of the bright field shall have been all laid in their earth-furrows.

13. Suppose, then, that this come to pass; and more than this, suppose that wood engraving also be superseded, and that instead of imperfect transcripts of drawings, on wood-blocks or metal-plates, photography enabled us to give, quite cheaply, and without limit to number,

facsimiles of the finished light-and-shade drawings of artists themselves. Another group of questions instantly offers itself, on these new conditions; namely, What are the best means for a light-and-shade drawing—the pen, or the pencil, the charcoal, or the flat wash? That is to say, the pen, producing shade by black lines, as old engraving did; the pencil, producing shade by grey lines, variable in force; the charcoal, producing a smoky shadow with no lines in it, or the washed tint, producing a transparent shadow with no lines in it. Which of these methods is the best?—or have they, each and all, virtues to be separately studied, and distinctively applied?

14. See how curiously the questions multiply on us. 1st, Is engraving to be only considered as cut work? 2nd, For present designs multipliable without cutting, by the sunshine, what methods or instruments of drawing will be best? And now, 3rdly, before we can discuss these questions at all, is there not another lying at the root of both, —namely, what a light-and-shade drawing itself properly *is*, and how it differs, or should differ, from a painting,— whether by mere deficiency, or by some entirely distinct merit?

15. For instance, you know how confidently it is said, in common talk about Turner, that his works are intelligible and beautiful when engraved, though incomprehensible as paintings. Admitting this to be so, do you suppose it is because the translation into light and shade is deficient in some qualities which the painting had, or that

it possesses some quality which the painting had not? Does it please more because it is deficient in the colour which confused a feeble spectator, and offended a dogmatic one,—or because it possesses a decision in its steady linear labour which interprets, or corrects, the swift pencilling of the artist?

16. Do you notice the two words I have just used, *Decision*, and *Linear*?—Decision, again introducing the idea of cuts or divisions, as opposed to gradations; Linear, as opposed to massive or broad?

Yet we use all these words at different times in praise, while they evidently mark inconsistent qualities. Softness and decision, breadth and delineation, cannot co-exist in equal degrees. There must surely therefore be a virtue in the engraving inconsistent with that of the painting, and vice versâ.

Now, be clear about these three questions which we have to-day to answer.

A. Is all engraving to be cut work?

B. If it need not be cut work, but only the reproduction of a drawing, what methods of executing a light-and-shade drawing will be best?

C. Is the shaded drawing itself to be considered only as a deficient or imperfect painting, or as a different thing from a painting, having a virtue of its own, belonging to black and white, as opposed to colour?

17. I will give you the answers at once, briefly, and amplify them afterwards.

A. All engraving must be cut work;—*that* is its differentia. Unless your effect be produced by cutting into some solid substance, it is not engraving at all.

B. The proper methods for light-and-shade drawing vary according to subject, and the degree of completeness desired,—some of them having much in common with engraving, and others with painting.

C. The qualities of a light-and-shade drawing ought to be entirely different from those of a painting. It is not a deficient or partial representation of a coloured scene or picture, but an entirely different reading of either. So that much of what is intelligible in a painting ought to be unintelligible in a light-and-shade study, and vice versâ.

You have thus three arts,—engraving, light-and-shade drawing, and painting.

Now I am not going to lecture, in this course, on painting, nor on light-and-shade drawing, but on engraving only. But I must tell you something about light-and-shade drawing first; or, at least, remind you of what I have before told.

18. You see that the three elementary lectures in my first volume are on Line, Light, and Colour,—that is to say, on the modes of art which produce linear designs, —which produce effects of light,—and which produce effects of colour.

I must, for the sake of new students, briefly repeat the explanation of these.

Here is an Arabian vase, in which the pleasure given to the eye is only by lines;—no effect of light, or of colour, is attempted. Here is a moonlight by Turner, in which there are no lines at all, and no colours at all. The pleasure given to the eye is only by modes of light and shade, or effects of light. Finally, here is an early Florentine painting, in which there are no lines of importance, and no effect of light whatever; but all the pleasure given to the eye is in gaiety and variety of colour.

19. I say, the pleasure given to the *eye*. The lines on this vase write something; but the ornamentation produced by the beautiful writing is independent of its meaning. So the moonlight is pleasant, first, as light; and the figures, first, as colour. It is not the shape of the waves, but the light on them; not the expression of the figures, but their colour, by which the *ocular* pleasure is to be given.

These three examples are violently marked ones; but, in preparing to draw *any* object, you will find that, practically, you have to ask yourself, Shall I aim at the colour of it, the light of it, or the lines of it? You can't have all three; you can't even have any two out of the three in equal strength. The best art, indeed, comes so near nature as in a measure to unite all. But the best is not, and cannot be, as good as nature; and the mode of its deficiency is that it must lose some of the colour, some of the light, or some of the delineation. And in conse-

quence, there is one great school which says, We will have the colour, and as much light and delineation as are consistent with it. Another which says, We will have shade, and as much colour and delineation as are consistent with it. The third, We will have delineation, and as much colour and shade as are consistent with it.

20. And though much of the two subordinate qualities may in each school be consistent with the leading one, yet the schools are evermore separate: as, for instance, in other matters, one man says, I will have my fee, and as much honesty as is consistent with it; another, I will have my honesty, and as much fee as is consistent with it. Though the man who will have his fee be subordinately honest,—though the man who will have his honour, subordinately rich, are they not evermore of diverse schools?

So you have, in art, the utterly separate provinces, though in contact at their borders, of

The Delineators;
The Chiaroscurists; and
The Colourists.

21. The Delineators are the men on whom I am going to give you this course of lectures. They are essentially engravers, an engraved line being the best means of delineation. The Chiaroscurists are essentially draughtsmen with chalk, charcoal, or single tints. Many of them paint, but always with some effort and pain. Leonardo is the type of them; but the entire Dutch school consists

of them, laboriously painting, without essential genius for colour.

The Colourists are the true painters; and all the faultless (as far, that is to say, as men's work can be so,) and consummate masters of art belong to them.

22. The distinction between the colourist and chiaroscurist school is trenchant and absolute; and may soon be shown you so that you will never forget it. Here is a Florentine picture by one of the pupils of Giotto, of very good representative quality, and which the University galleries are rich in possessing. At the distance at which I hold it, you see nothing but a chequer-work of brilliant, and, as it happens, even glaring colours. If you come near, you will find this patchwork resolve itself into a Visitation, and Birth of St. John; but that St. Elizabeth's red dress, and the Virgin's blue and white one, and the brown posts of the door, and the blue spaces of the sky, are painted in their own entirely pure colours, each shaded with more powerful tints of itself,—pale blue with deep blue, scarlet with crimson, yellow with orange, and green with richer green.

The whole is therefore as much a mosaic work of brilliant colour as if it were made of bits of glass. There is no effect of light attempted, or so much as thought of: you don't know even where the sun is; nor have you the least notion what time of day it is. The painter thinks you cannot be so superfluous as to want to know what time of day it is.

23. Here, on the other hand, is a Dutch picture of good average quality, also out of the University galleries. It represents a group of cattle, and a herdsman watching them. And you see in an instant that the time is evening. The sun is setting, and there is warm light on the landscape, the cattle, and the standing figure.

Nor does the picture in any conspicuous way seem devoid of colour. On the contrary, the herdsman has a scarlet jacket, which comes out rather brilliantly from the mass of shade round it; and a person devoid of colour faculty, or ill taught, might imagine the picture to be really a fine work of colour.

But if you will come up close to it, you will find that the herdsman has brown sleeves, though he has a scarlet jacket; and that the shadows of both are painted with precisely the same brown, and in several places with continuous touches of the pencil. It is only in the light that the scarlet is laid on.

This at once marks the picture as belonging to the lower or chiaroscurist school, even if you had not before recognized it as such by its pretty rendering of sunset effect.

24. You might at first think it a painting which showed greater skill than that of the school of Giotto. But the skill is not the primary question. The power of imagination is the first thing to be asked about. This Italian work imagines, and requires you to imagine also, a St. Elizabeth and St. Mary, to the best of your power.

But this Dutch one only wishes you to imagine an effect of sunlight on cowskin, which is a far lower strain of the imaginative faculty.

Also, as you may see the effect of sunlight on cowskin, in reality, any summer afternoon, but cannot so frequently see a St. Elizabeth, it is a far less useful strain of the imaginative faculty.

And, generally speaking, the Dutch chiaroscurists are indeed persons without imagination at all,—who, not being able to get any pleasure out of their thoughts, try to get it out of their sensations; note, however, also their technical connection with the Greek school of shade, (see my sixth inaugural lecture, p. 158,) in which colour was refused, not for the sake of deception, but of solemnity.

25. With these final motives you are not now concerned; your present business is the quite easy one of knowing, and noticing, the universal distinction between the methods of treatment in which the aim is light, and in which it is colour; and so to keep yourselves guarded from the danger of being misled by the, often very ingenious, talk of persons who have vivid colour sensations without having learned to distinguish them from what else pleases them in pictures. There is an interesting volume by Professor Taine on the Dutch school, containing a valuable historical analysis of the influences which formed it; but full of the gravest errors, resulting from the confusion in his mind between colour and tone,

in consequence of which he imagines the Dutch painters to be colourists.

26. It is so important for you to be grounded securely in these first elements of pictorial treatment, that I will be so far tedious as to show you one more instance of the relative intellectual value of the pure colour and pure chiaroscuro school, not in Dutch and Florentine, but in English art. Here is a copy of one of the lost frescoes of our Painted Chamber of Westminster;—fourteenth-century work, entirely conceived in colour, and calculated for decorative effect. There is no more light and shade in it than in a Queen of Hearts in a pack of cards;—all that the painter at first wants you to see is that the young lady has a white forehead, and a golden crown, and a fair neck, and a violet robe, and a crimson shield with golden leopards on it; and that behind her is clear blue sky. Then, farther, he wants you to read her name, "Debonnairete," which, when you have read, he farther expects you to consider what it is to be debonnaire, and to remember your Chaucer's description of the virtue:—

> She was not brown, nor dun of hue,
> But white as snowe, fallen new,
> With eyen glad, and browes bent,
> Her hair down to her heeles went,
> And she was simple, as dove on tree,
> Full debonnair of heart was she.

27. You see Chaucer dwells on the colour just as much

as the painter does, but the painter has also given her the English shield to bear, meaning that good-humour, or debonnairete, cannot be maintained by self-indulgence;—only by fortitude. Farther note, with Chaucer, the "eyen glad," and brows "bent" (high-arched and calm), the strong life (hair down to the heels,) and that her gladness is to be without subtlety,—that is to say, without the slightest pleasure in any form of advantage-taking, or any shrewd or mocking wit: "she was simple as dove on tree;" and you will find that the colour-painting, both in the fresco and in the poem, is in the very highest degree didactic and intellectual; and distinguished, as being so, from all inferior forms of art. Farther, that it requires you yourself first to understand the nature of simplicity, and to like simplicity in young ladies better than subtlety; and to understand why the second of Love's five kind arrows (Beauté being the first),

> Simplece ot nom, la seconde
> Qui maint homme parmi le monde
> Et mainte dame fait amer.

Nor must you leave the picture without observing that there is another reason for Debonnairete's bearing the Royal shield,—of all shields that, rather than another. "De-bonne-aire" meant originally "out of a good eagle's nest," the "aire" signifying the eagle's nest or eyrie especially, because it is flat, the Latin "area" being the root of all.

And this coming out of a good nest is recognized as, of all things, needfullest to give the strength which enables people to be good-humoured; and thus you have "debonnaire" forming the third word of the group, with "gentle" and "kind," all first signifying "of good race."

You will gradually see, as we go on, more and more why I called my third volume of lectures Eagle's Nest; for I am not fantastic in these titles, as is often said; but try shortly to mark my chief purpose in the book by them.

28. Now for comparison with this old art, here is a modern engraving, in which colour is entirely ignored; and light and shade alone are used to produce what is supposed to be a piece of impressive religious instruction. But it is not a piece of religious instruction at all;—only a piece of religious sensation, prepared for the sentimental pleasure of young ladies; whom (since I am honoured to-day by the presence of many) I will take the opportunity of warning against such forms of false theological satisfaction. This engraving represents a young lady in a very long and, though plain, very becoming white dress, tossed upon the waves of a terrifically stormy sea, by which neither her hair nor her becoming dress is in the least wetted; and saved from despair in that situation by closely embracing a very thick and solid stone Cross. By which far-sought and original metaphor young ladies are expected, after some effort, to understand the recourse they may have, for support,

to the Cross of Christ, in the midst of the troubles of this world.

29. As those troubles are for the present, in all probability, limited to the occasional loss of their thimbles when they have not taken care to put them into their workboxes,—the concern they feel at the unsympathizing gaiety of their companions,—or perhaps the disappointment at not hearing a favourite clergyman preach,—(for I will not suppose the young ladies interested in this picture to be affected by any chagrin at the loss of an invitation to a ball, or the like worldliness,)—it seems to me the stress of such calamities might be represented, in a picture, by less appalling imagery. And I can assure my fair little lady friends,—if I still have any,—that whatever a young girl's ordinary troubles or annoyances may be, her true virtue is in shaking them off, as a rose-leaf shakes off rain, and remaining debonnaire and bright in spirits, or even, as the rose would be, the brighter for the troubles; and not at all in allowing herself to be either drifted or depressed to the point of requiring religious consolation. But if any real and deep sorrow, such as no metaphor can represent, fall upon her, does she suppose that the theological advice of this piece of modern art can be trusted? If she will take the pains to think truly, she will remember that Christ Himself never says anything about holding by His Cross. He speaks a good deal of bearing it; but never for an instant of holding by it. It is His Hand, not His Cross,

which is to save either you, or St. Peter, when the waves are rough. And the utterly reckless way in which modern religious teachers, whether in art or literature, abuse the metaphor somewhat briefly and violently leant on by St. Paul, simply prevents your understanding the meaning of any word which Christ Himself speaks on this matter! So you see this popular art of light and shade, catching you by your mere thirst of sensation, is not only undidactic, but the reverse of didactic—deceptive and illusory.

30. This *popular* art, you hear me say, scornfully; and I have told you, in some of my teaching in Aratra Pentelici, that all great art must be popular. Yes, but great art is popular, as bread and water are to children fed by a father. And vile art is popular, as poisonous jelly is, to children cheated by a confectioner. And it is quite possible to make any kind of art popular on those last terms. The colour school may become just as poisonous as the colourless, in the hands of fools, or of rogues. Here is a book I bought only the other day,—one of the things got up cheap to catch the eyes of mothers at bookstalls,—Puss in Boots, illustrated; a most definite work of the colour school—red jackets and white paws and yellow coaches as distinct as Giotto or Raphael would have kept them. But the thing is done by fools for money, and becomes entirely monstrous and abominable. Here, again, is colour art produced by fools for religion: here is Indian sacred painting,—a black god

with a hundred arms, with a green god on one side of him and a red god on the other; still a most definite work of the colour school. Giotto or Raphael could not have made the black more resolutely black, (though the whole colour of the school of Athens is kept in distinct separation from one black square in it), nor the green more unquestionably green. Yet the whole is pestilent and loathsome.

31. Now but one point more, and I have done with this subject for to-day.

You must not think that this manifest brilliancy and Harlequin's-jacket character is essential in the colour school. The essential matter is only that everything should be of *its own* definite colour: it may be altogether sober and dark, yet the distinctness of hue preserved with entire fidelity. Here, for instance, is a picture of Hogarth's,—one of quite the most precious things we have in our galleries. It represents a meeting of some learned society — gentlemen of the last century, very gravely dressed, but who, nevertheless, as gentlemen pleasantly did in that day,—you remember Goldsmith's weakness on the point—wear coats of tints of dark red, blue, or violet. There are some thirty gentlemen in the room, and perhaps seven or eight different tints of subdued claret-colour in their coats; and yet every coat is kept so distinctly of its own proper claret-colour, that each gentleman's servant would know his master's.

Yet the whole canvas is so grey and quiet, that as I

now hold it by this Dutch landscape, with the vermilion jacket, you would fancy Hogarth's had no colour in it at all, and that the Dutchman was half-way to becoming a Titian; whereas Hogarth's is a consummate piece of the most perfect colourist school, which Titian could not beat, in its way; and the Dutchman could no more paint half an inch of it than he could summon a rainbow into the clouds.

32. Here then, you see, are, altogether, five works, all of the absolutely pure colour school:—

1. One, Indian,—Religious Art;
2. One, Florentine,—Religious Art;
3. One, English, from Painted Chamber, Westminster, —Ethic Art;
4. One, English,—Hogarth,—Naturalistic Art;
5. One, English,—to-day sold in the High Street,— Caricaturist Art.

And of these, the Florentine and old English are divine work, God-inspired; full, indeed, of faults and innocencies, but divine, as good children are.

Then this by Hogarth is entirely wise and right; but worldly-wise, not divine.

While the old Indian, and this, with which we feed our children at this hour, are entirely damnable art;—every bit of it done by the direct inspiration of the devil,—feeble, ridiculous,—yet mortally poisonous to every noble quality in body and soul.

33. I have now, I hope, guarded you sufficiently from the danger either of confusing the inferior school of chia-

roscuro with that of colour, or of imagining that a work must necessarily be good, on the sole ground of its belonging to the higher group. I can now proceed securely to separate the third school, that of Delineation, from both; and to examine its special qualities.

It begins, (see Inaugural Lectures, § 137,) in the primitive work of races insensible alike to shade and to colour, and nearly devoid of thought and of sentiment, but gradually developing into both.

Now as the design is primitive, so are the means likely to be primitive. A line is the simplest work of art you can produce. What are the simplest means you can produce it with?

A Cumberland lead pencil is a work of art in itself, quite a nineteenth-century machine. Pen and ink are complex and scholarly; and even chalk or charcoal not always handy.

But the primitive line, the first and last, generally the best of lines, is that which you have elementary faculty of at your fingers' ends, and which kittens can draw as well as you—the scratch.

The first, I say, and the last of lines. Permanent exceedingly,—even in flesh, or on mahogany tables, often more permanent than we desire. But when studiously and honourably made, divinely permanent, or delightfully—as on the venerable desks of our public schools, most of them, now, specimens of wood engraving dear to the heart of England.

34. Engraving, then, is in brief terms, the Art of Scratch. It is essentially the cutting into a solid substance for the sake of making your ideas as permanent as possible,—graven with an iron pen in the Rock for ever. *Permanence*, you observe, is the object, not multiplicability;—that is quite an accidental, sometimes not even a desirable, attribute of engraving. Duration of your work —fame, and the undeceived vision of all men, on the pane of glass of the window on a wet day, or on the pillars of the castle of Chillon, or on the walls of the pyramids;—a primitive art,—yet first and last with us.

Since then engraving, we say, is essentially cutting into the surface of any solid; as the primitive design is in lines or dots, the primitive cutting of such design is a scratch or a hole; and scratchable solids being essentially three—stone, wood, metal,—we shall have three great schools of engraving to investigate in each material.

35. On tablet of stone, on tablet of wood, on tablet of steel,—the first giving the law to everything; the second true Athenian, like Athena's first statue in olive-wood, making the law legible and homely; and the third true Vulcanian, having the splendour and power of accomplished labour.

Now of stone engraving, which is joined inseparably with sculpture and architecture, I am not going to speak at length in this course of lectures. I shall speak only of wood and metal engraving. But there is one circumstance in stone engraving which it is necessary

to observe in connection with the other two branches of the art.

The great difficulty for a primitive engraver is to make his scratch deep enough to be visible. Visibility is quite as essential to your fame as permanence; and if you have only your furrow to depend on, the engraved tablet, at certain times of day, will be illegible, and passed without notice.

But suppose you fill in your furrow with something black, then it will be legible enough at once; and if the black fall out or wash out, still your furrow is there, and may be filled again by anybody.

Therefore, the noble stone engravers, using marble to receive their furrow, fill that furrow with marble ink.

And you have an engraved plate to purpose;—with the whole sky for its margin! Look here—the front of the church of San Michele of Lucca,—white marble with green serpentine for ink; or here,—the steps of the Giant's Stair, with lead for ink; or here,—the floor of the Pisan Duomo, with porphyry for ink. Such cutting, filled in with colour or with black, branches into all sorts of developments,—Florentine mosaic on the one hand, niello on the other, and infinite minor arts.

36. Yet we must not make this filling with colour part of our definition of engraving. To engrave is, in final strictness, "to decorate a surface with furrows." (Cameos, in accuratest terms, are minute sculptures, not engravings.) A ploughed field is the purest type of such art; and is, on hilly land, an exquisite piece of decoration.

Therefore it will follow that engraving distinguishes itself from ordinary drawing by greater need of muscular effort.

The quality of a pen drawing is to be produced easily, —deliberately, always,* but with a point that *glides* over the paper. Engraving, on the contrary, requires always force, and its virtue is that of a line produced by pressure, or by blows of a chisel.

It involves, therefore, always, ideas of power and dexterity, but also of restraint; and the delight you take in it should involve the understanding of the difficulty the workman dealt with. You perhaps doubt the extent to which this feeling justly extends, (in the first volume of "Modern Painters," expressed under the head "Ideas of Power.") But why is a large stone in any building grander than a small one? Simply because it was more difficult to raise it. So, also, an engraved line is, and ought to be, recognized as more grand than a pen or pencil line, because it was more difficult to execute it.

In this mosaic of Lucca front you forgive much, and admire much, because you see it is all cut in stone. So, in wood and steel, you ought to see that every line has been costly; but observe, costly of deliberative, no less than athletic or executive power. The main use of the restraint which makes the line difficult to draw, is to give time and motive for deliberation in drawing it, and to ensure its being the best in your power.

* Compare Inaugural Lectures, § 144.

37. For, as with deliberation, so without repentance, your engraved line must be. It may, indeed, be burnished or beaten out again in metal, or patched and botched in stone; but always to disadvantage, and at pains which must not be incurred often. And there is a singular evidence in one of Durer's finest plates that, in his time, or at least in his manner of work, it was not possible at all. Among the disputes as to the meaning of Durer's Knight and Death, you will find it sometimes suggested, or insisted, that the horse's raised foot is going to fall into a snare. What has been fancied a noose is only the former outline of the horse's foot and limb, uneffaced.

The engraved line is therefore to be conclusive; not experimental. "I have determined this," says the engraver. Much excellent pen drawing is excellent in being tentative,—in being experimental. Indeterminate, not through want of meaning, but through fulness of it—halting *wisely* between two opinions—feeling cautiously after clearer opinions. But your engraver has made up his opinion. This is so, and must for ever be so, he tells you. A very proper thing for a thoughtful man to say; a very improper and impertinent thing for a foolish one to say. Foolish engraving is consummately foolish work. Look,—all the world,—look for evermore, says the foolish engraver; see what a fool I have been. How many lines I have laid for nothing. How many lines upon lines, with no precept, much less superprecept.

38. Here, then, are two definite ethical characters in all engraved work. It is Athletic; and it is Resolute. Add one more; that it is Obedient;—in their infancy the nurse, but in their youth the slave, of the higher arts; servile, both in the mechanism and labour of it, and in its function of interpreting the schools of painting as superior to itself.

And this relation to the higher arts we will study at the source of chief power in all the normal skill of Christendom, Florence; and chiefly, as I said, in the work of one Florentine master, Sandro Botticelli.

LECTURE II.

THE RELATION OF ENGRAVING TO OTHER ARTS IN FLORENCE.

39. From what was laid before you in my last lecture, you must now be aware that I do not mean, by the word 'engraving,' merely the separate art of producing plates from which black pictures may be printed.

I mean, by engraving, the art of producing decoration on a surface by the touches of a chisel or a burin; and I mean by its relation to other arts, the subordinate service of this linear work, in sculpture, in metal work, and in painting; or in the representation and repetition of painting.

And first, therefore, I have to map out the broad relations of the arts of sculpture, metal work, and painting, in Florence, among themselves, during the period in which the art of engraving was distinctly connected with them.*

40. You will find, or may remember, that in my lecture on Michael Angelo and Tintoret I indicated the singular importance, in the history of art, of a space of forty years, between 1480, and the year in which Raphael died, 1520. Within that space of time the change was completed, from the principles of ancient, to those of existing, art;—a

* Compare Aratra Pentelici, § 154.

manifold change, not definable in brief terms, but most clearly characterized, and easily remembered, as the change of conscientious and didactic art, into that which proposes to itself no duty beyond technical skill, and no object but the pleasure of the beholder. Of that momentous change itself I do not purpose to speak in the present course of lectures; but my endeavour will be to lay before you a rough chart of the course of the arts in Florence up to the time when it took place; a chart indicating for you, definitely, the growth of conscience, in work which is distinctively conscientious, and the perfecting of expression and means of popular address, in that which is distinctively didactic.

41. Means of popular address, observe, which have become singularly important to us at this day. Nevertheless, remember that the power of printing, or reprinting, black *pictures*,—practically contemporary with that of reprinting black *letters*,—modified the art of the draughtsman only as it modified that of the scribe. Beautiful and unique writing, as beautiful and unique painting or engraving, remain exactly what they were; but other useful and reproductive methods of both have been superadded. Of these, it is acutely said by Dr. Alfred Woltmann,*—

"A far more important part is played in the art-life of Germany by the technical arts for the *multiplying* of works; for Germany,

* "Holbein and His Time," 4to, Bentley, 1872, (a very valuable book,) p. 17. Italics mine.

while it was the land of book-printing, is also the land of picture-printing. Indeed, wood-engraving, which preceded the invention of book-printing, *prepared the way for it, and only left one step more necessary for it. Book-printing* and *picture-printing* have both the same inner cause for their origin, namely, the impulse to make each mental gain a common blessing. Not merely princes and rich nobles were to have the privilege of adorning their private chapels and apartments with beautiful religious pictures; the poorest man was also to have his delight in that which the artist had devised and produced. It was not sufficient for him when it stood in the church as an altar-shrine, visible to him and to the congregation from afar; he desired to have it as his own, to carry it about with him, to bring it into his own home. The grand importance of wood-engraving and copperplate is not sufficiently estimated in historical investigations. They were not alone of use in the advance of art; they form an epoch in the entire life of mind and culture. The idea embodied and multiplied in pictures became like that embodied in the printed word, the herald of every intellectual movement, and conquered the world."

42. "Conquered the world"? The rest of the sentence is true, but this, hyperbolic, and greatly false. It should have been said that both painting and engraving have conquered much of the good in the world, and, hitherto, little or none of the evil.

Nor do I hold it usually an advantage to art, in teaching, that it *should* be common, or constantly seen. In becoming intelligibly and kindly beautiful, while it remains solitary and unrivalled, it has a greater power. Westminster Abbey is more didactic to the English nation, than a million of popular illustrated treatises on architecture.

Nay, even that it cannot be understood but with some difficulty, and must be sought before it can be seen, is no harm. The noblest didactic art is, as it were, set on a hill, and its disciples come to it. The vilest destructive and corrosive art stands at the street corners, crying, "Turn in hither; come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled."

And Dr. Woltmann has allowed himself too easily to fall into the common notion of Liberalism, that bad art, disseminated, is instructive, and good art isolated, not so. The question is, first, I assure you, whether what art you have got is good or bad. If essentially bad, the more you see of it, the worse for you. Entirely popular art is all that is noble, in the cathedral, the council chamber, and the market-place; not the paltry coloured print pinned on the wall of a private room.

43. I despise the poor!—do I, think you? Not so. They only despise the poor who think them better off with police news, and coloured tracts of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, than they were with Luini painting on their church walls, and Donatello carving the pillars of their Market-places.

Nevertheless, the effort to be universally, instead of locally, didactic, modified advantageously, as you know, and in a thousand ways varied, the earlier art of engraving: and the development of its popular power, whether for good or evil, came exactly—so fate appointed—at a time when the minds of the masses were agitated by the

struggle which closed in the Reformation in some countries, and in the desperate refusal of Reformation in others.* The two greatest masters of engraving whose lives we are to study, were, both of them, passionate reformers: Holbein no less than Luther; Botticelli no less than Savonarola.

44. Reformers, I mean, in the full and, accurately, the only, sense. Not preachers of new doctrines; but witnesses against the betrayal of the old ones, which were on the lips of all men, and in the lives of none. Nay, the painters are indeed more pure reformers than the priests. They rebuked the manifest vices of men, while they realized whatever was loveliest in their faith. Priestly reform soon enraged itself into mere contest for personal opinions; while, without rage, but in stern rebuke of all that was vile in conduct or thought,—in declaration of the always-received faiths of the Christian Church, and in warning of the power of faith, and death,† over the petty designs of men,—Botticelli and Holbein together fought foremost in the ranks of the reformation.

45. To-day I will endeavour to explain how they attained such rank. Then, in the next two lectures, the technics

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* See Carlyle, Frederick, Book III., chap. viii.

† I believe I am taking too much trouble in writing these lectures. This sentence, § 44, has cost me, I suppose, first and last, about as many hours as there are lines in it;—and my choice of these two words, faith and death, as representatives of power, will perhaps, after all, only puzzle the reader.

of both,—their way of speaking; and in the last two, what they had got to say.

First, then, we ask how they attained this rank;—who taught *them* what they were finally best to teach? How far must every people—how far did this Florentine people —teach its masters, before *they* could teach *it?*

Even in these days, when every man is, by hypothesis, as good as another, does not the question sound strange to you? You recognize in the past, as you think, clearly, that national advance takes place always under the guidance of masters, or groups of masters, possessed of what appears to be some new personal sensibility or gift of invention; and we are apt to be reverent to these alone, as if the nation itself had been unprogressive, and suddenly awakened, or converted, by the genius of one man.

No idea can be more superficial. Every nation must teach its tutors, and prepare itself to receive them; but the fact on which our impression is founded—the rising, apparently by chance, of men whose singular gifts suddenly melt the multitude, already at the point of fusion; or suddenly form, and *in*form, the multitude which has gained coherence enough to be capable of formation,—enables us to measure and map the gain of national intellectual territory, by tracing first the lifting of the mountain chains of its genius.

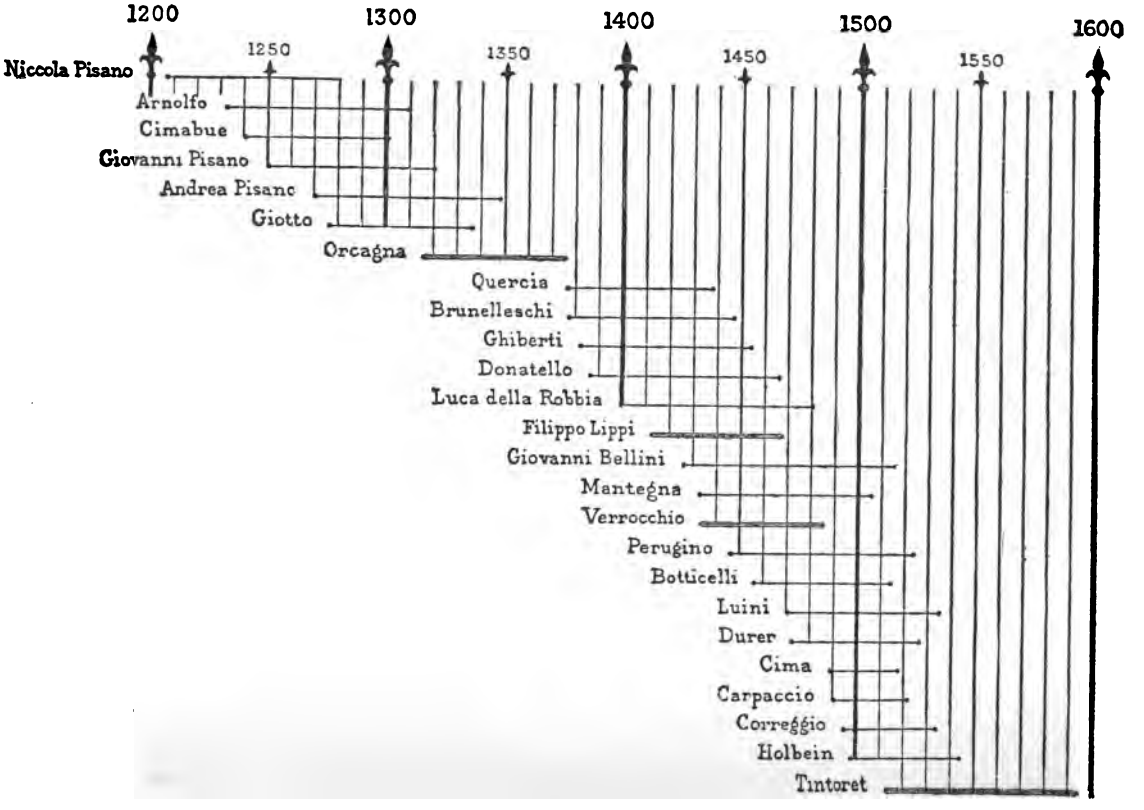
46. I have told you that we have nothing to do at present with the great transition from ancient to modern habits of thought which took place at the beginning of the

sixteenth century. I only want to go as far as that point; —where we shall find the old superstitious art represented *finally* by Perugino, and the modern scientific and anatomical art represented *primarily* by Michael Angelo. And the epithet bestowed on Perugino by Michael Angelo, 'goffo nell' arte,' dunce, or blockhead, in art,—being, as far as my knowledge of history extends, the most cruel, the most false, and the most foolish insult ever offered by one great man to another,—does you at least good service, in showing how trenchant the separation is between the two orders of artists,*—how exclusively we may follow out the history of all the 'goffi nell' arte,' and write our Florentine Dunciad, and Laus Stultitiæ, in peace; and never trench upon the thoughts or ways of these proud ones, who showed their fathers' nakedness, and snatched their masters' fame.

47. The Florentine dunces in art are a multitude; but I only want you to know something about twenty of them.

Twenty!—you think that a grievous number? It may, perhaps, appease you a little to be told that when you really have learned a very little, accurately, about these twenty dunces, there are only five more men among the artists of Christendom whose works I shall ask you to

* He is said by Vasari to have called Francia the like. Francia is a child compared to Perugino; but a finished working-goldsmith and ornamental painter nevertheless; and one of the very last men to be called 'goffo,' except by unparalleled insolence.


1200
1250
1300
1350
1400
1450
1500
1550
1600
Niccola Pisano
Arnolfo
Cimabue
Giovanni Pisano
Andrea Pisano
Giotto
Orcagna
Quercia
Brunelleschi
Ghiberti
Donatello
Luca della Robbia
Filippo Lippi
Giovanni Bellini
Mantegna
Verrocchio
Perugino
Botticelli
Luini
Durer
Cima
Carpaccio
Correggio
Holbein
Tintoret

examine while you are under my care. That makes twenty-five altogether,—an exorbitant demand on your attention, you still think? And yet, but a little while ago, you were all agog to get me to go and look at Mrs. A's sketches, and tell you what was to be thought about *them;* and I've had the greatest difficulty to keep Mrs. B's photographs from being shown side by side with the Raphael drawings in the University galleries. And you will waste any quantity of time in looking at Mrs. A's sketches or Mrs. B's photographs; and yet you look grave, because, out of nineteen centuries of European art-labour and thought, I ask you to learn something seriously about the works of five-and-twenty men!

48. It is hard upon you, doubtless, considering the quantity of time you must nowadays spend in trying which can hit balls farthest. So I will put the task into the simplest form I can.

Here are the names of the twenty-five men,* and opposite each, a line indicating the length of his life, and the position of it in his century. The diagram still, however, needs a few words of explanation. Very chiefly, for those who know anything of my writings, there is needed explanation of its not including the names of Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, Turner, and other such men, always reverently put before you at other times.

* The diagram used at the lecture is engraved on the opposite leaf; the reader had better draw it larger for himself, as it had to be made inconveniently small for this size of leaf.

They are absent, because I have no fear of your not looking at these. All your lives through, if you care about art, you will be looking at them. But while you are here at Oxford, I want to make you learn what you should know of these earlier, many of them weaker, men, who yet, for the very reason of their greater simplicity of power, are better guides for you, and of whom some will remain guides to all generations. And, as regards the subject of our present course, I have a still more weighty reason;—Vandyke, Gainsborough, Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, and the rest, are essentially portrait painters. They give you the likeness of a man: they have nothing to say either about his future life, or his gods. 'That is the look of him,' they say: 'here, on earth, we know no more.'

49. But these, whose names I have engraved, have something to say—generally much,—either about the future life of man, or about his gods. They are therefore, literally, seers or prophets. False prophets, it may be, or foolish ones; of that you must judge; but you must read before you can judge; and read (or hear) them consistently; for you don't know them till you have heard them out. But with Sir Joshua, or Titian, one portrait is as another: it is here a pretty lady, there a great lord; but speechless, all;—whereas, with these twenty-five men, each picture or statue is not merely another person of a pleasant society, but another chapter of a Sibylline book.

50. For this reason, then, I do not want Sir Joshua or

Velasquez in my defined group; and for my present purpose, I can spare from it even four others:—namely, three who have *too* special gifts, and must each be separately studied—Correggio, Carpaccio, Tintoret;—and one who has no special gift, but a balanced group of many—Cima. This leaves twenty-one for classification, of whom I will ask you to lay hold thus. You must continually have felt the difficulty caused by the names of centuries not tallying with their years;—the year 1201 being the first of the 13th century, and so on. I am always plagued by it myself, much as I have to think and write with reference to chronology; and I mean for the future, in our art chronology, to use as far as possible a different form of notation.

51. In my diagram the vertical lines are the divisions of tens of years; the thick black lines divide the centuries. The horizontal lines, then, at a glance, tell you the length and date of each artist's life. In one or two instances I cannot find the date of birth; in one or two more, of death; and the line indicates then only the ascertained * period during which the artist worked.

And, thus represented, you see nearly all their lives run through the year of a new century; so that if the lines representing them were needles, and the black bars of the years 1300, 1400, 1500 were magnets, I could take up nearly all the needles by lifting the bars.

* 'Ascertained,' scarcely any date ever is, quite satisfactorily. The diagram only represents what is practically and broadly true. I may have to modify it greatly in detail.

52. I will actually do this, then, in three other simple diagrams. I place a rod for the year 1300 over the lines of life, and I take up all it touches. I have to drop Niccola Pisano, but I catch five. Now, with my rod of 1400, I have dropped Orcagna indeed, but I again catch five. Now, with my rod of 1500, I indeed drop Filippo Lippi and Verrocchio, but I catch seven. And here I have three pennons, with the staves of the years 1300, 1400, and 1500 running through them,—holding the names of nearly all the men I want you to study in easily remembered groups of five, five, and seven. And these three groups I shall hereafter call the 1300 group, 1400 group, and 1500 group.

53. But why should four unfortunate masters be dropped out?

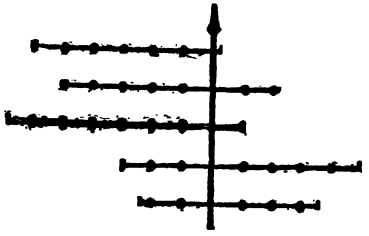
Well, I want to drop them out, at any rate; but not in disrespect. In hope, on the contrary, to make you remember them very separately indeed;—for this following reason.

We are in the careless habit of speaking of men who form a great number of pupils, and have a host of inferior satellites round them, as masters of great schools.

But before you call a man a master, you should ask, Are his pupils greater or less than himself? If they are greater than himself, he is a master indeed;—he has been a true teacher. But if all his pupils are less than himself, he may have been a great *man*, but in all probability has been a bad *master*, or no master.

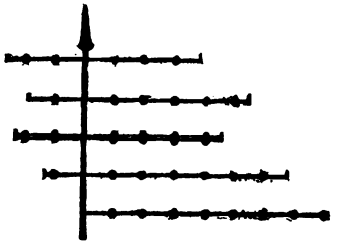
1300.

1240—1303 Cimabue
1250—1321 Giovanni Pisano
1232—1310 Arnolfo
1270—1345 Andrea Pisano
1276—1336 Giotto



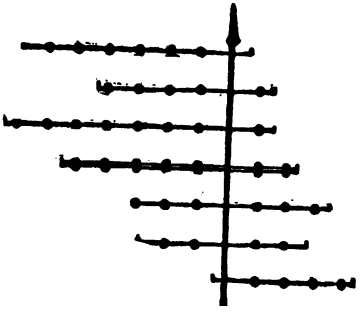
1400.

1374—1438 Quercia
1381—1455 Ghiberti
1377—1446 Brunelleschi
1386—1468 Donatello
1400—1481 Luca



1500.

1431—1506 Mantegna
1457—1515 Botticelli
1426—1516 Bellini
1446—1524 Perugino
1470—1535 Luini
1471—1527 Durer
1498—1543 Holbein



Now these men, whom I have signally left out of my groups, are true *Masters.*

Niccola Pisano taught all Italy; but chiefly his own son, who succeeded, and in some things very much surpassed him.

Orcagna taught all Italy, after him, down to Michael Angelo. And these two—Lippi, the religious schools, Verrocchio, the artist schools, of their century.

Lippi taught Sandro Botticelli; and Verrocchio taught Leonardo da Vinci, Lorenzo di Credi, and Perugino. Have I not good reason to separate the masters of such pupils from the schools they created?

54. But how is it that I can drop just the cards I want out of my pack?

Well certainly I force and fit matters a little: I leave some men out of my list whom I should like to have in it; —Benozzo, Gozzoli, for instance, and Mino da Fiesole; but I can do without them, and so can you also, for the present. I catch Luca by a hair's-breadth only, with my 1400 rod; but on the whole, with very little coaxing, I get the groups in this memorable and quite literally 'handy' form. For see, I write my list of five, five, and seven, on bits of pasteboard; I hinge my rods to these; and you can brandish the school of 1400 in your left hand, and of 1500 in your right, like—railway signals;—and I wish all railway signals were as clear. Once learn, thoroughly, the groups in this artificially contracted form, and you can refine and complete afterwards at your leisure.

55. And thus actually flourishing my two pennons, and getting my grip of the men, in either hand, I find a notable thing concerning my two flags. The men whose names I hold in my left hand are all sculptors; the men whose names I hold in my right are all painters.

You will infallibly suspect me of having chosen them thus on purpose. No, honour bright!—I chose simply the greatest men,—those I wanted to talk to you about. I arranged them by their dates; I put them into three conclusive pennons; and behold what follows!

56. Farther, note this: in the 1300 group, four out of the five men are architects as well as sculptors and painters. In the 1400 group, there is one architect; in the 1500, none. And the meaning of that is, that in 1300 the arts were all united, and duly led by architecture; in 1400, sculpture began to assume too separate a power to herself; in 1500, painting arrogated all, and, at last, betrayed all. From which, with much other collateral evidence, you may justly conclude that the three arts ought to be practised together, and that they naturally are so. I long since asserted that no man could be an architect who was not a sculptor. As I learned more and more of my business, I perceived also that no man could be a sculptor who was not an architect;—that is to say, who had not knowledge enough, and pleasure enough in structural law, to be able to build, on occasion, better than a mere builder. And so, finally, I now positively aver to you that nobody, in the graphic arts, can be quite rightly

a master of anything, who is not master of everything!

57. The junction of the three arts in men's minds, at the best times, is shortly signified in these words of Chaucer. Love's Garden,

> Everidele
> Enclosed was, and walled well
> With high walls, embatailled,
> Portrayed without, and well entayled
> With many rich portraitures.

The French original is better still, and gives four arts in unison:—

> Quant suis avant un pou alé
> Et vy un vergier grant et le,
> Bien cloz de bon mur batillié
> Pourtrait dehors, et entaillié
> Ou (for au) maintes riches escriptures.

Read also carefully the description of the temples of Mars and Venus in the Knight's Tale. Contemporary French uses 'entaille' even of solid sculpture and of the living form; and Pygmalion, as a perfect master, professes wood carving, ivory carving, wax-work, and iron-work, no less than stone sculpture:—

> Pimalion, uns entaillieres
> Pourtraians en fuz * et en pierres,
> En mettaux, en os, et en cire,
> Et en toute autre matire.

* For fust, log of wood, erroneously 'fer' in the later printed editions. Compare the account of the works of Art and Nature, towards the end of the Romance of the Rose.

58. I made a little sketch, when last in Florence, of a subject which will fix the idea of this unity of the arts in your minds. At the base of the tower of Giotto are two rows of hexagonal panels, filled with bas-reliefs. Some of these are by unknown hands,—some by Andrea Pisano, some by Luca della Robbia, two by Giotto himself; of these I sketched the panel representing the art of Painting.

You have in that bas-relief one of the foundation-stones of the most perfectly-built tower in Europe; you have that stone carved by its architect's own hand; you find, further, that this architect and sculptor was the greatest painter of his time, and the friend of the greatest poet; and you have represented by him a painter in his shop,—bottega,—as symbolic of the entire art of painting.

59. In which representation, please note how carefully Giotto shows you the tabernacles, or niches, in which the paintings are to be placed. Not independent of their frames, these panels of his, you see!

Have you ever considered, in the early history of painting, how important also is the history of the frame maker? It is a matter, I assure you, needing your very best consideration. For the frame was made before the picture. The painted window is much, but the aperture it fills was thought of before it. The fresco by Giotto is much, but the vault it adorns was planned first. Who thought of these;—who built?

Questions taking us far back before the birth of the shepherd boy of Fesolé,—questions not to be answered by

history of painting only, still less of painting in *Italy* only.

60. And in pointing out to you this fact, I may once for all prove to you the essential unity of the arts, and show you how impossible it is to understand one without reference to another. Which I wish you to observe all the more closely, that you may use, without danger of being misled, the data, of unequalled value, which have been collected by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in the book which they have called a History of Painting in Italy, but which is in fact only a dictionary of details relating to that history. Such a title is an absurdity on the face of it. For, first, you can no more write the history of painting in Italy than you can write the history of the south wind in Italy. The sirocco does indeed produce certain effects at Genoa, and others at Rome; but what would be the value of a treatise upon the winds, which, for the honour of any country, assumed that every city of it had a native sirocco?

But, further,—imagine what success would attend the meteorologist who should set himself to give an account of the south wind, but take no notice of the north!

And, finally, suppose an attempt to give you an account of either wind, but none of the seas, or mountain passes, by which they were nourished, or directed.

61. For instance, I am in this course of lectures to give you an account of a single and minor branch of graphic art,—engraving. But observe how many references to local circumstances it involves. There are three materials

for it, we said;—stone, wood, and metal. Stone engraving is the art of countries possessing marble and gems; wood engraving, of countries overgrown with forest; metal engraving, of countries possessing treasures of silver and gold. And the style of a stone engraver is formed on pillars and pyramids; the style of a wood engraver under the eaves of larch cottages; the style of a metal engraver in the treasuries of kings. Do you suppose I could rightly explain to you the value of a single touch on brass by Finiguerra, or on box by Bewick, unless I had grasp of the great laws of climate and country; and could trace the inherited sirocco or tramontana of thought to which the souls and bodies of the men owed their existence?

62. You see that in this flag of 1300 there is a dark strong line in the centre, against which you read the name of Arnolfo.

In writing our Florentine Dunciad, or History of Fools, can we possibly begin with a better day than All Fools' Day? On All Fools' Day—the first, if you like better so to call it, of the month of *opening*,—in the year 1300, is signed the document making Arnolfo a citizen of Florence, and in 1310 he dies, chief master of the works of the Cathedral there. To this man, Crowe and Cavalcasella give half a page, out of three volumes of five hundred pages each.

But lower down in my flag, (not put there because of any inferiority, but by order of chronology,) you will see a name sufficiently familiar to you—that of Giotto; and

to him, our historians of painting in Italy give some hundred pages, under the impression, stated by them at page 243 of their volume, that "in his hands, art in the Peninsula became entitled for the first time to the name of Italian."

63. Art became Italian! Yes, but *what* art? Your authors give a perspective—or what they call such,—of the upper church of Assisi, as if that were merely an accidental occurrence of blind walls for Giotto to paint on!

But how came the upper church of Assisi there? How came it to be vaulted—to be aisled? How came Giotto to be asked to paint upon it?

The art that built it, good or bad, must have been an Italian one, before Giotto. He could not have painted on the air. Let us see how his panels were made for him.

64. This Captain—the centre of our first group—Arnolfo, has always hitherto been called 'Arnolfo di Lapo;'—Arnolfo the son of Lapo.

Modern investigators come down on us delightedly, to tell us—Arnolfo was *not* the son of Lapo.

In these days you will have half a dozen doctors, writing each a long book, and the sense of all will be,—Arnolfo wasn't the son of Lapo. Much good may you get of that!

Well, you will find the fact to be, there was a great Northman builder, a true son of Thor, who came down into Italy in 1200, served the order of St. Francis there, built Assisi, taught Arnolfo how to build, with Thor's

hammer, and disappeared, leaving his name uncertain—Jacopo—Lapo—nobody knows what. Arnolfo always recognizes this man as his true father, who put the soul-life into him; he is known to his Florentines always as Lapo's Arnolfo.

That, or some likeness of that, is the vital fact. You never can get at the literal limitation of living facts. They disguise themselves by the very strength of their life: get told again and again in different ways by all manner of people;—the literalness of them is turned topsy-turvy, inside-out, over and over again;—then the fools come and read them wrong side upwards, or else, say there never was a fact at all. Nothing delights a true block-head so much as to prove a negative;—to show that every-body has been wrong. Fancy the delicious sensation, to an empty-headed creature, of fancying for a moment that he has emptied everybody else's head as well as his own! nay, that, for once, his own hollow bottle of a head has had the best of other bottles, and has been *first* empty; first to know—nothing.

65. Hold, then, steadily the first tradition about this Arnolfo. That his real father was called "Cambio" matters to you not a straw. That he never called himself Cambio's Arnolfo—that nobody else ever called him so, down to Vasari's time, is an infinitely significant fact to you. In my twenty-second letter in Fors Clavigera you will find some account of the noble habit of the Italian artists to call themselves by their master's names, con-

sidering their master as their true father. If not the name of the master, they take that of their native place, as having owed the character of their life to that. They rarely take their own family name: sometimes it is not even known,—when best known, it is unfamiliar to us. The great Pisan artists, for instance, never bear any other name than 'the Pisan;' among the other five-and-twenty names in my list, not above six, I think, the two German, with four Italian, are family names. Perugino, (Peter of Perugia), Luini, (Bernard of Luino), Quercia, (James of Quercia), Correggio, (Anthony of Correggio), are named from their native places. Nobody would have understood me if I had called Giotto, 'Ambrose Bondone;' or Tintoret, Robusti; or even Raphael, Sanzio. Botticelli is named from his master; Ghiberti from his father-in-law; and Ghirlandajo from his work. Orcagna, who *did*, for a wonder, name himself from his father, Andrea Cione, of Florence, has been always called 'Angel' by everybody else; while Arnolfo, who never named himself from his father, is now like to be fathered against his will.

But, I again beg of you, keep to the old story. For it represents, however inaccurately in detail, clearly in sum, the fact, that some great master of German Gothic at this time came down into Italy, and changed the entire form of Italian architecture by his touch. So that while Niccola and Giovanni Pisano are still virtually Greek artists, experimentally introducing Gothic forms, Arnolfo and Giotto adopt the entire Gothic ideal of form, and

thenceforward use the pointed arch and steep gable as the limits of sculpture.

66. Hitherto I have been speaking of the relations of my twenty-five men to each other. But now, please note their relations altogether to the art before them. These twenty-five include, I say, all the great masters of *Christian* art.

Before them, the art was too savage to be Christian; afterwards, too carnal to be Christian.

Too savage to be Christian? I will justify that assertion hereafter; but you will find that the European art of 1200 includes all the most developed and characteristic conditions of the style in the north which you have probably been accustomed to think of as NORMAN, and which you may always most conveniently call so; and the most developed conditions of the style in the south, which, formed out of effete Greek, Persian, and Roman tradition, you may, in like manner, most conveniently express by the familiar word BYZANTINE. Whatever you call them, they are in origin adverse in temper, and remain so up to the year 1200. Then an influence appears, seemingly that of one man, Nicholas the Pisan, (our first MASTER, observe,) and a new spirit adopts what is best in each, and gives to what it adopts a new energy of its own, namely, this conscientious and didactic power which is the speciality of its progressive existence. And just as the newborn and natural art of Athens collects and reanimates Pelasgian and Egyptian tradition, purifying their worship,

and perfecting their work, into the living heathen faith of the world, so this new-born and natural art of Florence collects and animates the Norman and Byzantine tradition, and forms out of the perfected worship and work of both, the honest Christian faith, and vital craftsmanship, of the world.

67. Get this first summary, therefore, well into your minds. The word 'Norman' I use roughly for North-savage;—roughly, but advisedly. I mean Lombard, Scandinavian, Frankish; everything north-savage that you can think of, except Saxon. (I have a reason for that exception; never mind it just now.)*

All north-savage I call NORMAN, all south-savage I call BYZANTINE; this latter including dead native Greek primarily—then dead foreign Greek, in Rome;—then Arabian — Persian — Phœnician — Indian — all you can think of, in art of hot countries, up to this year 1200, I rank under the one term Byzantine. Now all this cold art—Norman, and all this hot art—Byzantine, is virtually dead, till 1200. It has no conscience, no didactic power;† it is devoid of both, in the sense that dreams are.

* Of course it would have been impossible to express in any accurate terms, short enough for the compass of a lecture, the conditions of opposition between the Heptarchy and the Northmen;—between the Byzantine and Roman;—and between the Byzantine and Arab, which form minor, but not less trenchant, divisions of Art-province, for subsequent delineation. If you can refer to my "Stones of Venice," see § 20 of its first chapter.

† Again much too broad a statement: not to be qualified but by a

Then in the 13th century, men wake as if they heard an alarum through the whole vault of heaven, and true human life begins again, and the cradle of this life is the Val d'Arno. There the northern and southern nations meet; there they lay down their enmities; there they are first baptized unto John's baptism for the remission of sins; there is born, and thence exiled,—thought faithless for breaking the font of baptism to save a child from drowning, in his 'bel San Giovanni,'—the greatest of Christian poets; he who had pity even for the lost.

68. Now, therefore, my whole history of *Christian* architecture and painting begins with this Baptistery of Florence, and with its associated Cathedral. Arnolfo brought the one into the form in which you now see it; he laid the foundation of the other, and that to purpose, and he is therefore the CAPTAIN of our first school.

For this Florentine Baptistery * is the great one of the

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length of explanation here impossible. My lectures on Architecture, now in preparation, will contain further detail.

* At the side of my page, here, I find the following memorandum, which was expanded in the viva-voce lecture. The reader must make what he can of it, for I can't expand it here.

Sense of Italian Church plan:

Baptistery, to make Christians in; house, or dome, for them to pray and be preached to in; bell-tower, to ring all over the town, when they were either to pray together, rejoice together, or to be warned of danger.

Harvey's picture of the Covenanters, with a shepherd on the outlook, as a campanile.

world. Here is the centre of Christian knowledge and power.

And it is one piece of large *engraving*. White substance, cut into, and filled with black, and dark-green.

No more perfect work was afterwards done; and I wish you to grasp the idea of this building clearly and irrevocably,—first, in order (as I told you in a previous lecture) to quit yourselves thoroughly of the idea that ornament should be decorated construction; and, secondly, as the noblest type of the intaglio ornamentation, which developed itself into all minor application of black and white to engraving.

69. That it should do so first at Florence, was the natural sequence, and the just reward, of the ancient skill of Etruria in chased metal-work. The effects produced in gold, either by embossing or engraving, were the direct means of giving interest to his surfaces at the command of the 'auri faber,' or orfevre: and every conceivable artifice of studding, chiselling, and interlacing was exhausted by the artists in gold, who were at the head of the metal-workers, and from whom the ranks of the sculptors were reinforced.

The old French word 'orfroiz,' (aurifrigia,) expresses essentially what we call 'frosted' work in gold; that which resembles small dew or crystals of hoar-frost; the 'frigia' coming from the Latin frigus. To chase, or enchase, is not properly said of the gold; but of the jewel

which it secures with hoops or ridges, (French, *en*chasser*). Then the armourer, or cup and casket maker, added to this kind of decoration that of flat inlaid enamel; and the silver-worker, finding that the raised filigree (still a staple at Genoa) only attracted tarnish, or got crushed, early sought to decorate a surface which would bear external friction, with labyrinths of safe incision.

70. Of the *security* of incision as a means of permanent decoration, as opposed to ordinary carving, here is a beautiful instance in the base of one of the external shafts of the Cathedral of Lucca; 13th-century work, which by this time, had it been carved in relief, would have been a shapeless remnant of indecipherable bosses. But it is still as safe as if it had been cut yesterday, because the smooth round mass of the pillar is entirely undisturbed; into that, furrows are cut with a chisel as much under command and as powerful as a burin. The effect of the design is trusted entirely to the depth of these incisions—here dying out and expiring in the light of the marble, there deepened, by drill holes, into as definitely a black line as if it were drawn with ink; and describing the outline of the leafage with a delicacy of touch and of perception which no man will ever surpass, and which very few have rivalled, in the proudest days of design.

71. This security, in silver plates, was completed by filling the furrows with the black paste which at once

* And 'chassis,' a window frame, or tracery.

exhibited and preserved them. The transition from that niello-work to modern engraving is one of no real moment: my object is to make you understand the qualities which constitute the *merit* of the engraving, whether charged with niello or ink. And this I hope ultimately to accomplish by studying with you some of the works of the four men, Botticelli and Mantegna in the south, Durer and Holbein in the north, whose names I have put in our last flag, above and beneath those of the three mighty painters,—Perugino the captain, Bellini on one side,—Luini on the other.

The four following lectures* will contain data necessary for such study: you must wait longer before I can place before you those by which I can justify what must greatly surprise some of my audience—my having given Perugino the captain's place among the three painters.

72. But I do so, at least primarily, because what is commonly thought affected in his design is indeed the true remains of the great architectual symmetry which was soon to be lost, and which makes him the true follower of Arnolfo and Brunelleschi; and because he is a sound craftsman and workman to the very heart's core. A noble, gracious, and quiet labourer from youth to death,

* This present lecture does not, as at present published, justify its title; because I have not thought it necessary to write the viva-voce portions of it which amplified the 69th paragraph. I will give the substance of them in better form elsewhere; meantime the part of the lecture here given may be in its own way useful.

—never weary, never impatient, never untender, never untrue. Not Tintoret in power, not Raphael in flexibility, not Holbein in veracity, not Luini in love,—their gathered gifts he has, in balanced and fruitful measure, fit to be the guide, and impulse, and father of all.

LECTURE III.

THE TECHNICS OF WOOD ENGRAVING.

73. I AM to-day to begin to tell you what it is necessary you should observe respecting methods of manual execution in the two great arts of engraving. Only to *begin* to tell you. There need be no end of telling you such things, if you care to hear them. The theory of art is soon mastered; but 'dal detto al fatto, v'e gran tratto;' and as I have several times told you in former lectures, every day shows me more and more the importance of the Hand.

74. Of the hand as a Servant, observe,—not of the hand as a Master. For there are two great kinds of manual work: one in which the hand is continually receiving and obeying orders; the other in which it is acting independently, or even giving orders of its own. And the dependent and submissive hand is a noble hand; but the independent or imperative hand is a vile one.

That is to say, as long as the pen, or chisel, or other graphic instrument, is moved under the direct influence of mental attention, and obeys orders of the brain, it is working nobly;—the moment it moves independently of

them, and performs some habitual dexterity of its own, it is base.

75. *Dexterity*—I say;—some 'right-handedness' of its own. We might wisely keep that word for what the hand does at the mind's bidding; and use an opposite word—sinisterity,—for what it does at its own. For indeed we want such a word in speaking of modern art;—it is all full of sinisterity. Hands independent of brains;—the left hand, by division of labour, not knowing what the right does,—still less what it ought to do.

76. Turning, then, to our special subject. All engraving, I said, is intaglio in the solid. But the solid, in wood engraving, is a coarse substance, easily cut; and in metal, a fine substance, not easily. Therefore, in general, you may be prepared to accept ruder and more elementary work in one than the other; and it will be the means of appeal to blunter minds.

You probably already know the difference between the actual methods of producing a printed impression from wood and metal; but I may perhaps make the matter a little more clear. In metal engraving, you cut ditches, fill them with ink, and press your paper into them. In wood engraving, you leave ridges, rub the tops of them with ink, and stamp them on your paper.

The instrument with which the substance, whether of the wood or steel, is cut away, is the same. It is a solid ploughshare, which, instead of throwing the earth aside, throws it up and out, producing at first a simple

ravine, or furrow, in the wood or metal, which you can widen by another cut, or extend by successive cuts. This (Fig. 1) is the general shape of the solid ploughshare:

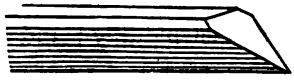

FIG. 1.

but it is of course made sharper or blunter at pleasure. The furrow produced is at first the wedge-shaped or cuneiform ravine, already so much dwelt upon in my lectures on Greek sculpture.

77. Since, then, in wood printing, you print from the surface left solid; and, in metal printing, from the hollows cut into it, it follows that if you put few touches on wood, you draw, as on a slate, with white lines, leaving a quantity of black; but if you put few touches on metal, you draw with black lines, leaving a quantity of white.

Now the eye is not in the least offended by quantity of white, but is, or ought to be, greatly saddened and offended by quantity of black. Hence it follows that you must never put little work on wood. You must not sketch upon it. You may sketch on metal as much as you please.

78. "Paradox," you will say, as usual. "Are not all our journals,—and the best of them, Punch, par excellence,—full of the most brilliantly swift and slight sketches, engraved on wood; while line-engravings take ten years to produce, and cost ten guineas each when they are done?"

Yes, that is so; but observe, in the first place, what appears to you a sketch on wood is not so at all, but a most laborious and careful imitation of a sketch on paper; whereas when you see what appears to be a sketch on metal, it *is* one. And in the second place, so far as the popular fashion is contrary to this natural method,—so far as we do in reality try to produce effects of sketching in wood, and of finish in metal,—our work is wrong.

Those apparently careless and free sketches on the wood ought to have been stern and deliberate; those exquisitely toned and finished engravings on metal ought to have looked, instead, like free ink sketches on white paper. That is the theorem which I propose to you for consideration, and which, in the two branches of its assertion, I hope to prove to you; the first part of it, (that wood-cutting should be careful,) in this present lecture; the second, (that metal-cutting should be, at least in a far greater degree than it is now, slight, and free,) in the following one.

79. Next, observe the distinction in respect of *thickness*, no less than number, of lines which may properly be used in the two methods.

In metal engraving, it is easier to lay a fine line than a thick one; and however fine the line may be, it lasts;—but in wood engraving it requires extreme precision and skill to leave a thin dark line, and when left, it will be quickly beaten down by a careless printer. Therefore, the virtue of wood engraving is to exhibit the qualities

and power of *thick* lines; and of metal engraving, to exhibit the qualities and power of *thin* ones.

All thin dark lines, therefore, in wood, broadly speaking, are to be used only in case of necessity; and thick lines, on metal, only in case of necessity.

80. Though, however, thin *dark* lines cannot easily be produced in wood, thin *light* ones may be struck in an instant. Nevertheless, even thin light ones must not be used, except with extreme caution. For observe, they are equally useless as outline, and for expression of mass. You know how far from exemplary or delightful your boy's first quite voluntary exercises in white line drawing on your slate were? You could, indeed, draw a goblin satisfactorily in such method;—a round O, with arms and legs to it, and a scratch under two dots in the middle, would answer the purpose; but if you wanted to draw a pretty face, you took pencil or pen, and paper—not your slate. Now, that instinctive feeling that a white outline is wrong, is deeply founded. For Nature herself draws with diffused light, and concentrated dark;—never, except in storm or twilight, with diffused dark, and concentrated light; and the thing we all like best to see drawn—the human face—cannot be drawn with white touches, but by extreme labour. For the pupil and iris of the eye, the eyebrow, the nostril, and the lip are all set in dark on pale ground. You can't draw a white eyebrow, a white pupil of the eye, a white nostril, and a white mouth, on a dark ground. Try it, and see what a

spectre you get. But the same number of dark touches, skilfully applied, will give the idea of a beautiful face. And what is true of the subtlest subject you have to represent, is equally true of inferior ones. Nothing lovely can be quickly represented by white touches. You must hew out, if your means are so restricted, the form by sheer labour; and that both cunning and dextrous. The Florentine masters, and Durer, often practise the achievement, and there are many drawings by the Lippis, Mantegna, and other leading Italian draughtsmen, completed to great perfection with the white line; but only for the sake of severest study, nor is their work imitable by inferior men. And such studies, however accomplished, always mark a disposition to regard chiaroscuro too much, and local colour too little.

We conclude, then, that we must never trust, in wood, to our power of outline with white; and our general laws, thus far determined, will be—thick lines in wood; thin ones in metal; complete drawing on wood; sketches, if we choose, on metal.

81. But why, in wood, lines at all? Why not cut out white *spaces*, and use the chisel as if its incisions were so much white paint? Many fine pieces of wood-cutting are indeed executed on this principle. Bewick does nearly all his foliage so; and continually paints the light plumes of his birds with single touches of his chisel, as if he were laying on white.

But this is not the finest method of wood-cutting. It

implies the idea of a system of light and shade in which the shadow is totally black. Now, no light and shade can be good, much less pleasant, in which all the shade is stark black. Therefore the finest wood-cutting ignores light and shade, and expresses only form, and *dark local colour*. And it is convenient, for simplicity's sake, to anticipate what I should otherwise defer telling you until next lecture, that fine metal engraving, like fine wood-cutting, ignores light and shade; and that, in a word, all good engraving whatsoever does so.

82. I hope that my saying so will make you eager to interrupt me. 'What! Rembrandt's etchings, and Lupton's mezzotints, and Le Keux's line-work,—do you mean to tell us that these ignore light and shade?'

I never said that *mezzotint* ignored light and shade, or ought to do so. Mezzotint is properly to be considered as chiaroscuro drawing on metal. But I do mean to tell you that both Rembrandt's etchings, and Le Keux's finished line-work, are misapplied labour, in so far as they regard chiaroscuro; and that consummate engraving never uses it as a primal element of pleasure.

83. We have now got our principles so far defined that I can proceed to illustration of them by example.

Here are facsimiles, very marvellous ones,* of two of

* By Mr. Burgess. The toil and skill necessary to produce a facsimile of this degree of precision will only be recognized by the reader who has had considerable experience of actual work.

THE LAST FURROW.

(Fig. 2) Fac-simile from Holbein's Woodcut.

the best wood engravings ever produced by art,—two subjects in Holbein's Dance of Death. You will probably like best that I should at once proceed to verify my last and most startling statement, that fine engraving disdained chiaroscuro.

This vignette (Fig. 2) represents a sunset in the open mountainous fields of southern Germany. And Holbein is so entirely careless about the light and shade, which a Dutchman would first have thought of, as resulting from the sunset, that, as he works, he forgets altogether where his light comes from. Here, actually, the shadow of the figure is cast from the side, right across the picture, while the sun is in front. And there is not the slightest attempt to indicate gradation of light in the sky, darkness in the forest, or any other positive element of chiaroscuro.

This is not because Holbein cannot give chiaroscuro if he chooses. He is twenty times a stronger master of it than Rembrandt; but he, therefore, knows exactly when and how to use it; and that wood engraving is not the proper means for it. The quantity of it which is needful for his story, and will not, by any sensational violence, either divert, or vulgarly enforce, the attention, he will give; and that with an unrivalled subtlety. Therefore I must ask you for a moment or two to quit the subject of technics, and look what these two woodcuts mean.

84. The one I have first shown you is of a ploughman ploughing at evening. It is Holbein's object, here, to express the diffused and intense light of a golden summer

sunset, so far as is consistent with grander purposes. A modern French or English chiaroscurist would have covered his sky with fleecy clouds, and relieved the ploughman's hat and his horses against it in strong black, and put sparkling touches on the furrows and grass. Holbein scornfully casts all such tricks aside; and draws the whole scene in pure white, with simple outlines.

85. And yet, when I put it beside this second vignette, (Fig. 3), which is of a preacher preaching in a feebly-lighted church, you will feel that the diffused warmth of the one subject, and diffused twilight in the other, are complete; and they will finally be to you more impressive than if they had been wrought out with every superficial means of effect, on each block.

For it is as a symbol, not as a scenic effect, that in each case the chiaroscuro is given. Holbein, I said, is at the head of the painter-reformers, and his Dance of Death is the most energetic and telling of all the forms given, in this epoch, to the *Rationalist* spirit of reform, preaching the new Gospel of Death,—"It is no matter whether you are priest or layman, what you believe, or what you do: here is the end." You shall see, in the course of our inquiry, that Botticelli, in like manner, represents the *Faithful* and *Catholic* temper of reform.

86. The teaching of Holbein is therefore always melancholy,—for the most part purely rational; and entirely furious in its indignation against all who, either by actual injustice in this life, or by what he holds to be false pro-

THE TWO PREACHERS.

(Fig. 3) Fac-simile from Holbein's Woodcut.

mise of another, destroy the good, or the energy, of the few days which man has to live. Against the rich, the luxurious, the Pharisee, the false lawyer, the priest, and the unjust judge, Holbein uses his fiercest mockery; but he is never himself unjust; never caricatures or equivocates; gives the facts as he knows them, with explanatory symbols, few and clear.

87. Among the powers which he hates, the pathetic and ingenious preaching of untruth is one of the chief; and it is curious to find his biographer, knowing this, and reasoning, as German critics nearly always do, from acquired knowledge, not perception, imagine instantly that he sees hypocrisy in the face of Holbein's preacher. "How skilfully," says Dr. Woltmann, "is the preacher propounding his doctrines; how thoroughly is his hypocrisy expressed in the features of his countenance, and in the gestures of his hands." But look at the cut yourself, candidly. I challenge you to find the slightest trace of hypocrisy in either feature or gesture. Holbein knew better. It is not the hypocrite who has power in the pulpit. It is the *sincere* preacher of untruth who does mischief there. The hypocrite's place of power is in trade, or in general society; none but the sincere ever get fatal influence in the pulpit. This man is a refined gentleman—ascetic, earnest, thoughtful, and kind. He scarcely uses the vantage even of his pulpit,—comes aside out of it, as an eager man would, pleading; he is intent on being understood—*is* understood; his congregation

are delighted—you might hear a pin drop among them: one is asleep indeed, who cannot see him, (being under the pulpit,) and asleep just because the teacher is as gentle as he is earnest, and speaks quietly.

88. How are we to know, then, that he speaks in vain? First, because among all his hearers you will not find one shrewd face. They are all either simple or stupid people: there is one nice woman in front of all, (else Holbein's representation had been caricature,) but she is not a shrewd one.

Secondly, by the light and shade. The church is not in extreme darkness—far from that; a grey twilight is over everything, but the sun is totally shut out of it;—not a ray comes in even at the window—*that* is darker than the walls, or vault.

Lastly, and chiefly, by the mocking expression of Death. Mocking, but not angry. The man has been preaching what he thought true. Death laughs at him, but is not indignant with him.

Death comes quietly: *I* am going to be preacher now; here is your own hour-glass, ready for me. You have spoken many words in your day. But "of the things which you have spoken, *this* is the sum,"—your death-warrant, signed and sealed. There's your text for to-day.

89. Of this other picture, the meaning is more plain, and far more beautiful. The husbandman is old and gaunt, and has past his days, not in speaking, but pressing the iron into the ground. And the payment for his life's

work is, that he is clothed in rags, and his feet are bare on the clods; and he has no hat—but the brim of a hat only, and his long, unkempt grey hair comes through. But all the air is full of warmth and of peace; and, beyond his village church, there is, at last, light indeed. His horses lag in the furrow, and his own limbs totter and fail: but one comes to help him. 'It is a long field,' says Death; 'but we'll get to the end of it to-day,—you and I.'

90. And now that we know the meaning, we are able to discuss the technical qualities farther.

Both of these engravings, you will find, are executed with blunt lines; but more than that, they are executed with *quiet* lines, entirely steady.

Now, here I have in my hand a lively woodcut of the present day—a good average type of the modern style of wood-cutting, which you will all recognize.*

The shade in this is drawn on the wood (not *cut*, but drawn, observe,) at the rate of at least ten lines in a second: Holbein's at the rate of about one line in three seconds.†

91. Now there are two different matters to be considered with respect to these two opposed methods of execution. The first, that the rapid work, though easy to the artist, is very difficult to the woodcutter; so that it

* The ordinary title-page of Punch.

† In the lecture-room, the relative rates of execution were shown; I arrived at this estimate by timing the completion of two small pieces of shade in the two methods.

implies instantly a separation between the two crafts, and that your wood engraver has ceased to be a draughtsman. I shall return to this point. I wish to insist on the other first; namely, the effect of the more deliberative method on the drawing itself.

92. When the hand moves at the rate of ten lines in a second, it is indeed under the government of the muscles of the wrist and shoulder; but it cannot possibly be under the complete government of the brains. I am able to do this zigzag line evenly, because I have got the use of the hand from practice; and the faster it is done, the evener it will be. But I have no mental authority over every line I thus lay: chance regulates them. Whereas, when I draw at the rate of two or three seconds to each line, my hand disobeys the muscles a little—the mechanical accuracy is not so great; nay, there ceases to be any *appearance* of dexterity at all. But there is, in reality, more manual skill required in the slow work than in the swift,—and all the while the hand is thoroughly under the orders of the brains. Holbein deliberately resolves, for every line, as it goes along, that it shall be *so* thick, *so* far from the next,—that it shall begin here, and stop there. And he is deliberately assigning the utmost quantity of meaning to it, that a line will carry.

93. It is not fair, however, to compare common work of one age with the best of another. Here is a woodcut of Tenniel's, which I think contains as high qualities as

it is possible to find in modern art.* I hold it as beyond others fine, because there is not the slightest caricature in it. No face, no attitude, is pushed beyond the degree of natural humour they would have possessed in life; and in precision of momentary expression, the drawing is equal to the art of any time, and shows power which would, if regulated, be quite adequate to producing an immortal work.

94. Why, then, is it *not* immortal? You yourselves, in compliance with whose demand it was done, forgot it the next week. It will become historically interesting; but no man of true knowledge and feeling will ever keep this in his cabinet of treasure, as he does these woodcuts of Holbein's.

The reason is that this is base coin,—alloyed gold. There *is* gold in it, but also a quantity of brass and lead —wilfully added—to make it fit for the public. Holbein's is beaten gold, seven times tried in the fire. Of which commonplace but useful metaphor the meaning here is, first, that to catch the vulgar eye a quantity of,—so-called,—light and shade is added by Tenniel. It is effective to an ignorant eye, and is ingeniously disposed; but it is entirely conventional and false, unendurable by any person who knows what chiaroscuro is.

Secondly, for one line that Holbein lays, Tenniel has a dozen. There are, for instance, a hundred and fifty-

* John Bull as Sir Oliver Surface, with Sir Peter Teazle and Joseph Surface. It appeared in Punch, early in 1863.

seven lines in Sir Peter Teazle's wig, without counting dots and slight cross-hatching;—but the entire face and flowing hair of Holbein's preacher are done with forty-five lines, all told.

95. Now observe what a different state of mind the two artists must be in on such conditions;—one, never in a hurry, never doing anything that he knows is wrong; never doing a line badly that he can do better; and appealing only to the feelings of sensitive persons, and the judgment of attentive ones. That is Holbein's habit of soul. What is the habit of soul of every modern engraver? Always in a hurry; everywhere doing things which he knows to be wrong—(Tenniel knows his light and shade to be wrong as well as I do)—continually doing things badly which he was able to do better; and appealing exclusively to the feelings of the dull, and the judgment of the inattentive.

Do you suppose that is not enough to make the difference between mortal and immortal art,—the original genius being supposed alike in both?*

96. Thus far of the state of the artist himself. I pass next to the relation between him and his subordinate, the woodcutter.

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* In preparing these passages for the press, I feel perpetual need of qualifications and limitations, for it is impossible to surpass the humour, or precision of expressional touch, in the really golden parts of Tenniel's works; and they *may* be immortal, as representing what is best in their day.

The modern artist requires him to cut a hundred and fifty-seven lines in the wig only,—the old artist requires him to cut forty-five for the face, and long hair, altogether. The actual proportion is roughly, and on the average, about one to twenty of cost in manual labor, ancient to modern,—the twentieth part of the mechanical labour, to produce an immortal instead of a perishable work,—the twentieth part of the labour; and—which is the greatest difference of all—that twentieth part, at once less mechanically difficult, and more mentally pleasant. Mr. Otley, in his general History of Engraving, says, "The greatest difficulty in wood engraving occurs in clearing out the minute quadrangular lights;" and in any modern woodcut you will see that where the lines of the drawing cross each other to produce shade, the white interstices are cut out so neatly that there is no appearance of any jag or break in the lines; they look exactly as if they had been drawn with a pen. It is chiefly difficult to cut the pieces clearly out when the lines cross at right angles; easier when they form oblique or diamond-shaped interstices; but in any case, some half-dozen cuts, and in square crossings as many as twenty, are required to clear one interstice. Therefore if I carelessly draw six strokes with my pen across other six, I produce twenty-five interstices, each of which will need at least six—perhaps twenty, careful touches of the burin to clear out.—Say ten for an average; and I demand two hundred and fifty exquisitely precise

touches from my engraver, to render ten careless ones of mine.

97. Now I take up Punch, at his best. The whole of the left side of John Bull's waistcoat—the shadow on his knee-breeches and great-coat—the whole of the Lord Chancellor's gown, and of John Bull's and Sir Peter Teazle's complexions, are worked with finished precision of cross-hatching. These have indeed some purpose in their texture; but in the most wanton and gratuitous way, the wall below the window is cross-hatched too, and that not with a double, but a treble line, Fig. 4.

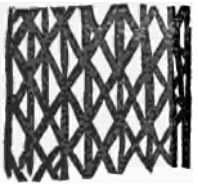

FIG. 4.

There are about thirty of these columns, with thirty-five interstices each: approximately, 1,050—certainly not fewer—interstices to be deliberately cut clear, to get that two inches square of shadow.

Now calculate—or think enough to feel the impossibility of calculating—the number of woodcuts used daily for our popular prints, and how many men are night and day cutting 1,050 square holes to the square inch, as the occupation of their manly life. And Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the North Americans fancy they have abolished slavery!

98. The workman cannot have even the consolation of pride; for his task, even in its finest accomplishment, is not really difficult,—only tedious. When you have once got into the practice, it is as easy as lying. To cut reg-

ular holes *without* a purpose is easy enough; but to cut *ir*regular holes *with* a purpose, that is difficult, for ever;—no tricks of tool or trade will give you power to do that.

The supposed difficulty—the thing which, at all events, it takes time to learn, is to cut the interstices neat, and each like the other. But is there any reason, do you suppose, for their being neat, and each like the other? So far from it, they would be twenty times prettier if they were irregular, and each different from the other. And an old woodcutter, instead of taking pride in cutting these interstices smooth and alike, resolutely cuts them rough and irregular; taking care, at the same time, never to have any more than are wanted, this being only one part of the general system of intelligent manipulation, which made so good an artist of the engraver that it is impossible to say of any standard old woodcut, whether the draughtsman engraved it himself or not. I should imagine, from the character and subtlety of the touch, that every line of the Dance of Death had been engraved by Holbein; we know it was not, and that there can be no certainty given by even the finest pieces of wood execution of anything more than perfect harmony between the designer and workman. And consider how much this harmony demands in the latter. Not that the modern engraver is unintelligent in applying his mechanical skill: very often he greatly improves the drawing; but we never could mistake his hand for Holbein's.

99. The true merit, then, of wood execution, as regards this matter of cross-hatching, is first that there be no more crossing than necessary; secondly, that all the interstices be various, and rough. You may look through the entire series of the Dance of Death without finding any cross-hatching whatever, except in a few unimportant bits of background, so rude as to need scarcely more than one touch to each interstice. Albert Durer crosses more definitely; but yet, in any fold of his drapery, every white spot differs in size from every other, and the arrangement of the whole is delightful, by the kind of variety which the spots on a leopard have.

On the other hand, where either expression or form can be rendered by the shape of the lights and darks, the old engraver becomes as careful as in an ordinary ground he is careless.

The endeavour, with your own hand, and common pen and ink, to copy a small piece of either of the two Holbein woodcuts (Figures 2 and 3) will prove this to you better than any words.

100. I said that, had Tenniel been rightly trained, there might have been the making of a Holbein, or nearly a Holbein, in him. I do not know; but I can turn from his work to that of a man who was not trained at all, and who was, without training, Holbein's equal.

Equal, in the sense that this brown stone, in my left hand, is the equal, though not the likeness, of that in my right. They are both of the same true and pure crystal;

but the one is brown with iron, and never touched by forming hand; the other has never been in rough companionship, and has been exquisitely polished. So with these two men. The one was the companion of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More. His father was so good an artist that you cannot always tell their drawings asunder. But the other was a farmer's son; and learned his trade in the back shops of Newcastle.

Yet the first book I asked you to get was his biography; and in this frame are set together a drawing by Hans Holbein, and one by Thomas Bewick. I know which is most scholarly; but I do *not* know which is best.

101. It is much to say for the self-taught Englishman; —yet do not congratulate yourselves on his simplicity. I told you, a little while since, that the English nobles had left the history of birds to be written, and their spots to be drawn, by a printer's lad;—but I did not tell you their farther loss in the fact that this printer's lad could have written their own histories, and drawn their own spots, if they had let him. But they had no history to be written; and were too closely maculate to be portrayed;—white ground in most places altogether obscured. Had there been Mores and Henrys to draw, Bewick could have drawn them; and would have found his function. As it was, the nobles of his day left him to draw the frogs, and pigs, and sparrows—of his day, which seemed to him, in his solitude, the best types of its Nobility. No

sight or thought of beautiful things was ever granted him;—no heroic creature, goddess-born—how much less any native Deity—ever shone upon him. To his utterly English mind, the straw of the stye, and its tenantry, were abiding truth;—the cloud of Olympus, and its tenantry, a child's dream. He could draw a pig, but not an Aphrodite.

102. The three pieces of woodcut from his Fables (the two lower ones enlarged) in the opposite plate, show his utmost strength and utmost rudeness. I must endeavour to make you thoroughly understand both:—the magnificent artistic power, the flawless virtue, veracity, tenderness,—the infinite humour of the man; and yet the difference between England and Florence, in the use they make of such gifts in their children.

For the moment, however, I confine myself to the examination of technical points; and we must follow our former conclusions a little further.

103. Because our lines in wood must be thick, it becomes an extreme virtue in wood engraving to economize lines,—not merely, as in all other art, to save time and power, but because, our lines being necessarily blunt, we must make up our minds to do with fewer, by many, than are in the object. But is this necessarily a disadvantage?

Absolutely, an immense disadvantage—a woodcut never can be so beautiful or good a thing as a painting, or line engraving. But in its own separate and useful way, an excellent thing, because, practised rightly, it exercises in

A

B

C

1

Things Celestial and Terrestrial,

as apparent to the English Mind.

the artist, and summons in you, the habit of abstraction; that is to say, of deciding what are the essential points in the things you see, and seizing these; a habit entirely necessary to strong humanity; and so natural to all humanity, that it leads, in its indolent and undisciplined states, to all the vulgar amateur's liking of sketches better than pictures. The sketch seems to put the thing for him into a concentrated and exciting form.

104. Observe, therefore, to guard you from this error, that a bad sketch is good for nothing; and that nobody can make a good sketch unless they generally are trying to finish with extreme care. But the abstraction of the essential particulars in his subject by a line-master, has a peculiar didactic value. For painting, when it is complete, leaves it much to your own judgment what to look at; and, if you are a fool, you look at the wrong thing;—but in a fine woodcut, the master says to you, "You *shall* look at this or at nothing."

105. For example, here is a little tailpiece of Bewick's, to the fable of the Frogs and the Stork.* He is, as I told you, as stout a reformer as Holbein, or Botticelli, or Luther, or Savonarola; and, as an impartial reformer, hits right and left, at lower or upper classes, if he sees them wrong. Most frequently, he strikes at vice without reference to class; but in this vignette he strikes definitely at the degradation of the viler popular mind which is incap-

* From Bewick's Æsop's Fables.

able of being governed, because it cannot understand the nobleness of kingship. He has written—better than written, engraved, sure to suffer no slip of type—his legend under the drawing; so that we know his meaning:

"Set them up with a king, indeed!"

106. There is an audience of seven frogs, listening to a speaker, or croaker, in the middle; and Bewick has set himself to show in all, but especially in the speaker, essential frogginess of mind—the marsh temper. He could not have done it half so well in painting as he has done by the abstraction of wood-outline. The characteristic of a manly mind, or body, is to be gentle in temper, and firm in constitution; the contrary essence of a froggy mind and body is to be angular in temper, and flabby in constitution. I have enlarged Bewick's orator-frog for you, Plate I, c., and I think you will feel that he is entirely expressed in those essential particulars.

This being perfectly good woodcutting, notice especially its deliberation. No scrawling or scratching, or cross-hatching, or '*free*' work of any sort. Most deliberate laying down of solid lines and dots, of which you cannot change one. The real difficulty of wood engraving is to cut every one of these black lines or spaces of the exactly right shape, and not at all to cross-hatch them cleanly.

107. Next, examine the technical treatment of the pig, above. I have purposely chosen this as an example of a white object on dark ground, and the frog as a dark object on light ground, to explain to you what I mean by saying

that fine engraving regards local colour, but not light and shade. You see both frog and pig are absolutely without light and shade. The frog, indeed, casts a shadow; but his hind leg is as white as his throat. In the pig you don't even know which way the light falls. But you know at once that the pig is white, and the frog brown or green.

108. There are, however, two pieces of chiaroscuro *implied* in the treatment of the pig. It is assumed that his curly tail would be light against the background—dark against his own rump. This little piece of heraldic quartering is absolutely necessary to solidify him. He would have been a white ghost of a pig, flat on the background, but for that alternative tail, and the bits of dark behind the ears. Secondly: Where the shade is necessary to suggest the position of his ribs, it is given with graphic and chosen points of dark, as few as possible; not for the sake of the shade at all, but of the skin and bone.

109. That, then, being the law of refused chiaroscuro, observe further the method of outline. We said that we were to have thick lines in wood, if possible. Look what thickness of black outline Bewick has left under our pig's chin, and above his nose.

But that is not a line at all, you think?

No;—a modern engraver would have made it one, and prided himself on getting it fine. Bewick leaves it actually thicker than the snout, but puts all his ingenuity of touch to vary the forms, and break the extremities of his

white cuts, so that the eye may be refreshed and relieved by new forms at every turn. The group of white touches filling the space between snout and ears might be a wreath of fine-weather clouds, so studiously are they grouped and broken.

And nowhere, you see, does a single black line cross another.

Look back to Figure 4, page 74, and you will know, henceforward, the difference between good and bad woodcutting.

110. We have also, in the lower woodcut, a notable instance of Bewick's power of abstraction. You will observe that one of the chief characters of this frog, which makes him humorous—next to his vain endeavour to get some firmness into his forefeet—is his obstinately angular hump-back. And you must feel, when you see it so marked, how important a general character of a frog it is to have a hump-back,—not at the shoulders, but the loins.

111. Here, then, is a case in which you will see the exact function that anatomy should take in art.

All the most scientific anatomy in the world would never have taught Bewick, much less you, how to draw a frog.

But when once you *have* drawn him, or looked at him, so as to know his points, it then becomes entirely interesting to find out *why* he has a hump-back. So I went myself yesterday to Professor Rolleston for a little anatomy, just as I should have gone to Professor Phillips for a little

geology; and the Professor brought me a fine little active frog; and we put him on the table, and made him jump all over it, and then the Professor brought in a charming Squelette of a frog, and showed me that he needed a projecting bone from his rump, as a bird needs it from his breast,—the one to attach the strong muscles of the hind legs, as the other to attach those of the fore-legs or wings. So that the entire leaping power of the frog is in his hump-back, as the flying power of the bird is in its breast-bone. And thus this Frog Parliament is most literally a Rump Parliament—everything depending on the hind legs, and nothing on the brains; which makes it wonderfully like some other Parliaments we know of nowadays, with Mr. Ayrton and Mr. Lowe for their æsthetic and acquisitive eyes, and a rump of Railway Directors.

112. Now, to conclude, for want of time only—I have but touched on the beginning of my subject,—understand clearly and finally this simple principle of all art, that the best is that which realizes absolutely, if possible. Here is a viper by Carpaccio: you are afraid to go near it. Here is an arm-chair by Carpaccio: you who came in late, and are standing, to my regret, would like to sit down in it. This is consummate art; but you can only have that with consummate means, and exquisitely trained and hereditary mental power.

With inferior means, and average mental power, you must be content to give a rude abstraction; but if rude abstraction *is* to be made, think what a difference there

must be between a wise man's and a fool's; and consider what heavy responsibility lies upon you in your youth, to determine, among realities, by what you will be delighted, and, among imaginations, by whose you will be led.

Holbein.

Grammar of Art School: Inaugural Series [Lectures on Art], Aratra, & Eagle's Nest, 2. To enable understanding of the elementary principles of the finest art, 3. Plan, 6. Sommairste, 17. Eagle's Nest, of good race; titles of bks, 19. Shaking off annoyances, & in troubles holding by Christ's hand, not cross, 20. Hogarth picture, 22.

Chart of the arts in Florence.

Reformers, witnesses against the betrayal of old doctrines, 34. Francia, 36. 4 Masters, 42. The 3 arts belong together, 43. Crowe & Cavalcaselle only a dictionary of details, no unity, 46. Some master of German Gothic came down into Italy, built Assisi, & taught entire Gothic forms to Arnolfo. [Mr. Moore says the French, thro' Burgundy, developed Gothic from Romanesque. Milman says the Arabs developed it. But Mr. Moore denies that Arab art was Gothic in structure.]

Athens collects & reanimates Pelasgian & Egyptian tradition. Nicola Pisano does this experimentally with Norman & Byzantine, 51. Peregrino, 56. Wood-cutting to be careful, metal-cutting free, 61. Holbein, 64. Holbein, 65-9. Rationalist temper of Reform, Catholique & Catholic C. of R., 66. Cartoon by Tenniel, 71. Woodcutting not so beautiful or good as painting or line engraving, not so precious because allowed gd, but excellent because exercising the habit of extracting seizing essential points, 79. Bewick. Line engraving regards local color, but not chiaroscuro, 79, 81.

5. Preface to Aratra. Intention of writing a course on Architecture, & then one on Florentine sculpture. But engraving is not [illegible] a basis of style. And facts must come first.